

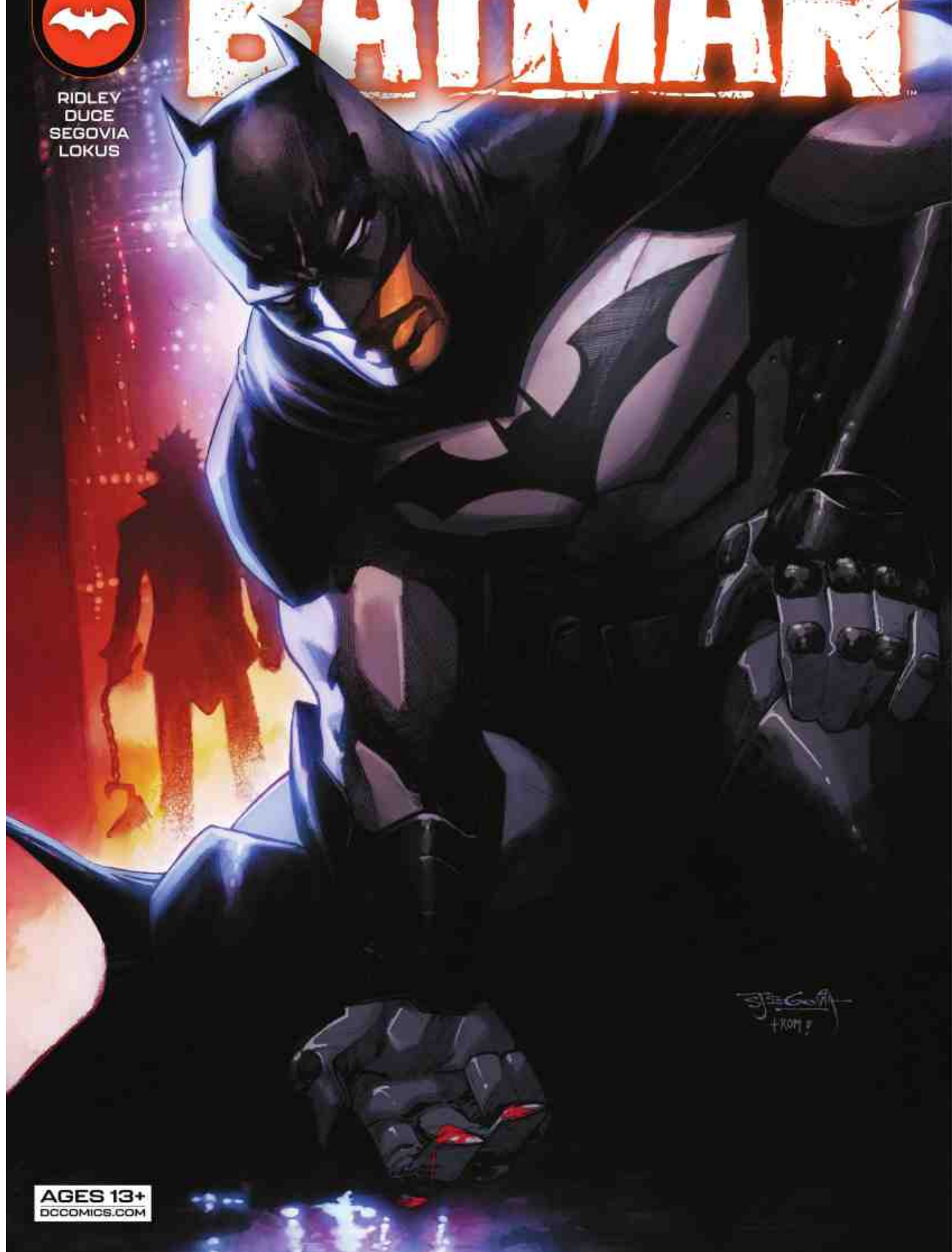


9



RIDLEY
DUCE
SEGOVIA
LOKUS

I AM BATMAN



Segovia
+ Romo

AGES 13+
DCCOMICS.COM

AN ALIEN PRINCESS DISGUISED AS A HUMAN BOY FACES HER FEARS...
AND FINDS HER **POWER.**

Galaxy

The Prettiest Star

WRITTEN BY
Jadzia Axelrod

ART BY
Jess Taylor

A NEW GRAPHIC NOVEL FOR
YOUNG ADULTS



MAY

DOES HE SCARE
ME? YEAH, HE
SCARES THE HELL
OUT OF ME.



HE SHOWED ME
I'M NOTHING. I'M
NOT THE **BADASS**
I THOUGHT I WAS.



I WAS HUMILIATED.
PHYSICALLY.
EMOTIONALLY.



DC Comics Proudly
Presents

I AM BATMAN

EMPIRE STATE OF MIND PART 4

JOHN RIDLEY WRITER
CHRISTIAN DUCE &
STEPHEN SEGOVIA ARTISTS
REX LOKUS COLORS
TROY PETERI LETTERS
STEPHEN SEGOVIA &
ROMULO FAJARDO JR. COVER
GERARDO ZAFFINO &
RAIN BEREDO, MATEUS
MANHANINI VARIANT COVERS

DAVE WIELGOSZ
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
BEN ABERNATHY
EDITOR

BATMAN CREATED
BY BOB KANE WITH
BILL FINGER

BLAM

I DON'T
LIKE BEING
HUMILIATED.









WHAT THE HELL IS THAT? HE'S DOWN!

HE'S A GANG HITTER. KILLED AT LEAST SIX PEOPLE.

WE'RE POLICE! EQUAL OR LESSER FORCE.

YOU DIDN'T SEE HIS GUN?



I SAW YOU DISARM HIM. I SAW THAT. THEN I SAW YOU BEAT HIS ASS.

WE ARE NOT THOSE PEOPLE, UNDERSTAND?

WHAT I UNDERSTAND, WHAT I KNOW, IS THE MAYOR SAYS YOU WORK WITH ME, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.



GET THAT PIECE OF ~~SHIT~~ PUT AWAY. I WILL TEXT YOU A STATEMENT FOR YOUR ARREST REPORT.



WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?

NOT THIS PUNK, THAT'S FOR SURE.

"WHAT YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT MY CLIENT, HE'S KIND OF ECCENTRIC."



HE HAS SOME PECULIAR TASTES IN REAL ESTATE, BUT HE'S PREPARED TO MEET THE PRICE ON THE RIGHT PIECE OF PROPERTY.

MR. LITVI...
LITVINO--

LITVÍNOV.
BUT CALL ME VOL.

VOL.
WHEN YOU SAY YOUR CLIENT HAS "PECULIAR TASTES"...



HE VALUES HIS PRIVACY, IS VERY SECURITY-MINDED...HE'D LIKE SOMETHING THAT'S CENTRALLY LOCATED, BUT VERY DISCREET.

IT SOUNDS LIKE HE'S LOOKING FOR AN UPSCALE **BOMB SHELTER**.

THAT MIGHT BE ONE WAY OF PUTTING IT.



VOL, YOUR ACCENT, IS THAT--

RUSSIAN.
YES.



JUST TO BE CLEAR, WHEN I HAVE A RUSSIAN NATIONAL SHOWING UP REPRESENTING AN ANONYMOUS CLIENT WILLING TO PAY **CASH** FOR NEW YORK REAL ESTATE...

I MEAN, RUSSIANS, OLIGARCHS... YOU JUST HEAR STORIES.



YOU UNDERSTAND MY CONCERN.

SURE, I GET IT.

"I APPRECIATE THAT YOU'RE **WORRIED**, TANYA, BUT YOU HAVE NO REASON TO BE."



I THINK I'VE GOT EVERY REASON TO WORRY. I'M ABOUT TO INVEST **BILLIONS** INTO A CITY WHERE THE MAYOR HIRED A RACIST AND MISOGYNIST AS HIS POLICE COMMISSIONER.

TANYA, WHEN YOU'RE THE MAYOR, YOU CAN LOSE THE SUPPORT OF THE TEACHERS, THE SANITATION WORKERS, EVERY OTHER CIVIL SERVANT...



...BUT WHEN YOU LOSE THE POLICE, YOU ARE **DONE**. I KNEW FOR MY AGENDA TO WORK, I NEEDED A, UH... **TRADITIONALIST** LIKE BECKET TO KEEP THE DEPARTMENT IN LINE.



AT WHAT COST? I'M A **LAWYER**. THOSE EMAILS AND TEXTS BECKET WAS SENDING AROUND TAIN'T EVERY ARREST MADE DURING HIS TENURE.

NOW YOU'VE GOT A DEPARTMENT IN **DISARRAY**, AND COURTS THAT ARE GOING TO BE CLOGGED WITH APPEALS.

SIR, THE PRESS IS ASKING FOR COMMENT.



TANYA, I'M VERY SORRY. I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE MEDIA.



CARMICHAEL, DOES YOUR BOSS KNOW WHAT HE'S DOING?

THE MAYOR, HE...TENDS TO LEAD WITH HIS HEART.



YEAH...



"...THAT DOESN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION."

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?



JUST PULLING UP SOME FILES.

ON MY COMPUTER, KEENAN?

THE COMPUTER BELONGS TO THE NYPD.



AND WE'RE ALL... **BROTHERS**, AREN'T WE, CHUBB?



GET THE **SHIT** OUT OF HERE, KEENAN.



LISTEN, THIS **ISN'T** GOTHAM. WE DON'T SIT AROUND WAITING FOR MASKS TO DO FOR US. WE DO FOR **OURSELVES**.

YOU CAN EITHER GET **ON BOARD** WITH THAT, OR YOU CAN END UP **OVERBOARD**. AND--TRUST ME--YOU DON'T WANT TO BE FLAPPING AROUND IN **NEW YORK HARBOR** ALL BY YOUR LONESOME.



'CAUSE I PROMISE YOU, IF IT COMES TO IT, I WILL **DROWN** YOU.

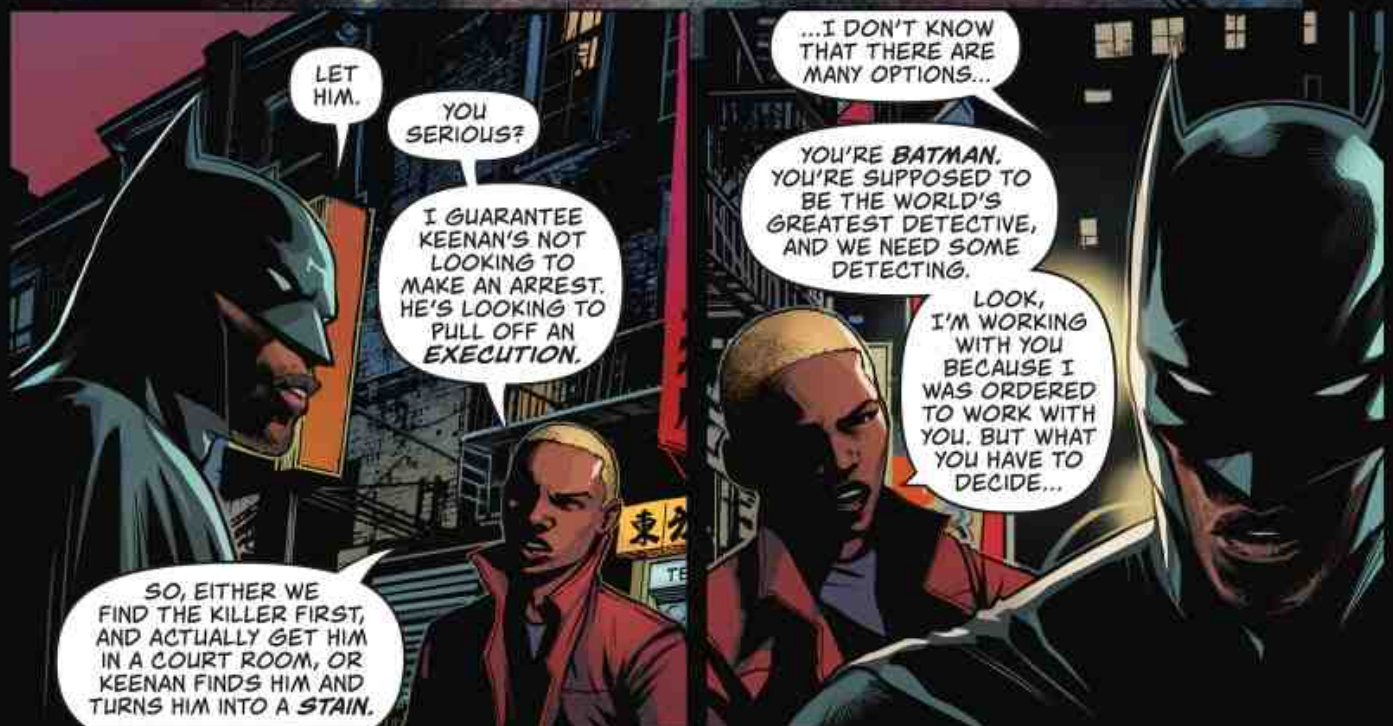
"DO YOU FEEL THREATENED?"



DO I FEEL
THREATENED?
BY KEENAN? NO.
DUDE'S A CLOWN.
BUT I THINK HE'S
A THREAT TO
OUR CASE.

KEENAN WAS
PULLING UP OUR FILES
ON MY COMPUTER.

HE'S TRYING
TO GET A JUMP
ON FINDING WHOEVER
MURDERED
COMMISSIONER
BECKET.



LET
HIM.

YOU
SERIOUS?

I GUARANTEE
KEENAN'S NOT
LOOKING TO
MAKE AN ARREST.
HE'S LOOKING TO
PULL OFF AN
EXECUTION.

SO, EITHER WE
FIND THE KILLER FIRST,
AND ACTUALLY GET HIM
IN A COURT ROOM, OR
KEENAN FINDS HIM AND
TURNS HIM INTO A *STAIN*.

...I DON'T KNOW
THAT THERE ARE
MANY OPTIONS...

YOU'RE *BATMAN*.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO
BE THE WORLD'S
GREATEST DETECTIVE,
AND WE NEED SOME
DETECTING.

LOOK,
I'M WORKING
WITH YOU
BECAUSE I
WAS ORDERED
TO WORK WITH
YOU. BUT WHAT
YOU HAVE TO
DECIDE...



"ARE YOU UP FOR THE WORK?"

FOR REAL, JACE...



YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE GIVING ME SUPPORT, AND YOU BRING THE GLUM. WHAT'S UP?

...NOTHING...

YOUR ATTITUDE ISN'T NOTHING, SO...WHAT IS UP?

JUST... STUFF, TAM. SOME DAYS IT'S HARD BEING A FOX.



YOU SOUND LIKE TIFF. I'M WORRIED ABOUT HER.

SHE'S NOT DOING REAL WELL. IT'S LIKE SHE'S... I DON'T KNOW. SHE FEELS GUILTY ABOUT ME BEING POISONED.

WHY?

I DON'T KNOW. BUT WHATEVER THE REASON...WE NEED TO BE THERE FOR HER.



I'M STILL TRYING TO FIGURE MYSELF OUT.

I THOUGHT I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING, BUT I GOT SHOWN UP. BAD.

I'M NOT SURE I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES.



NOBODY HAS WHAT IT TAKES TO GET BY ON THEIR OWN.



SAME AS I TRUST YOU'LL BE THERE TO HELP TIFF FIND HER WAY...

"...TRUST THE PEOPLE
AROUND YOU TO HELP YOU."

CENTRAL PARK.

HELLO,
JACE...

WELCOME TO
NEW YORK.

BELATEDLY.

HADIYAH...

YEAH, UH...
I'M SORRY
I DIDN'T
CALL WHEN I
FIRST GOT
HERE...

IT'S
ALL RIGHT. I'M
NOT LOOKING
FOR EXCUSES.
I'M JUST HAPPY
TO SEE YOU.



SO, WHAT'S UP THAT I FINALLY GET A CALL?

I NEED SOME OF YOUR GOOD INQUISITIVE THINKING.

ON...

THESE MURDERS THAT HAVE BEEN HAPPENING IN THE CITY: DEVLIN RUBEL, COMMISSIONER BECKET...

YOU CALLED TO TALK ABOUT MURDERS?



MY MOTHER'S SETTING UP AN IMPACT FUND TO HELP THE CITY. IF THERE'S A WAY WE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT THESE KILLINGS...

HMM, YEAH. AND THEN THERE'S THE TRUTH.



THE TRUTH IS I CAME TO YOU BECAUSE YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT--

ABOUT KILLING?

I...NO. I DIDN'T MEAN THAT.

YOU KNOW ABOUT CHARACTER.



YOU'VE SEEN THE CRIME SCENE PHOTOS? WHAT KIND OF PERSON DOES THAT TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING?

HMM, MAN RAY.

MAN RAY? WHO'S--

THE SURREALIST ARTIST. YOU KNOW ABOUT SURREALISM, DON'T YOU?

I...YOU KNOW, I MEAN...



OKAY. WE'RE TAKING A LITTLE "WELCOME TO NEW YORK" FIELD TRIP.

FIELD TRIP TO WHERE?

"I'M TAKING YOU
OVER TO M.O.M.A."

SURREALISM.
IT'S AN ARTISTIC
MOVEMENT THAT
BEGAN IN EUROPE
JUST AFTER THE
FIRST WORLD
WAR.

IT WAS
A WAY FOR
ARTISTS TO
MAKE SENSE
OF, AND BRING
BEAUTY TO, AN
OTHERWISE
GROTESQUE
WORLD.

HOW DOES
THIS "MAKE SENSE"
OF ANYTHING? IT
LOOKS LIKE A BAD
DREAM.

ASIDE FROM
YOUR NARROW VIEW OF
WHAT CONSTITUTES ART,
SURREALISM'S DEFINED
BY THE ABSENCE OF
REASON. THE LESS
LOGIC, THE MORE
BEAUTY.

WHEN I
SHOWED YOU THE
CRIME SCENE
PICTURES, YOU SAID
SOMETHING ABOUT
MAN RAY.

THERE WAS A LEGENDARY
MURDER IN LOS ANGELES IN
THE 1940S. THE **BLACK DAHLIA
KILLING**. A YOUNG WOMAN
TORTURED, **VIVISECTED**, AND
PUT ON DISPLAY LIKE RUBEL
AND BECKET.

THERE ARE PEOPLE
WHO THINK THE MURDER
WAS INSPIRED BY MAN RAY'S
ART.

I DON'T
THINK THESE
CRIMES ARE
CONNECTED,
BUT...

**EMMANUEL
RADNITZKY.**
A BRILLIANT
AMERICAN ARTIST
WHO WENT BY THE
NAME MAN RAY.

THE
REASON I
THOUGHT
OF HIM...

...I DO THINK THIS KILLER IS SOMEONE ARTISTICALLY
INCLINED, DISSOCIATED FROM THOUGHTS OR
FEELINGS, AND YOUNG AND STRONG ENOUGH
TO OVERPOWER HIS VICTIMS.

THAT SHOULD
NARROW THE SUSPECTS
CONSIDERABLY.

ONE MORE
QUESTION. YOU
EVER HEAR OF
SOMETHING
CALLED "THE
HOTLIST"?

NO, BUT
I CAN ASK
AROUND.

THANK YOU,
HADIYAH.

OF
COURSE.
AND, JACE,
WHATEVER
THE REASON...

...IT'S
GOOD
TO SEE
YOU.

"A SENSE OF FEAR
CONTINUES TO
GRIP NEW YORK
TONIGHT."







"...IS BY DOING FOR OTHERS."

THIS PROFILE YOU CAME UP WITH IS CRAZY GOOD. I'M LOADING IT INTO A MATRIX, AND WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH SOME POTENTIAL LEADS.

NO DISRESPECT, BUT...HOW THE HELL DID YOU COME UP WITH THIS?

I DIDN'T. HADIYAH DID.



WAIT...YOU TOLD HADIYAH YOU'RE BATMAN?

I DIDN'T TELL HER I WAS BATMAN. I TOLD HER THAT--

THAT YOU NEEDED HELP SOLVING A SERIES OF MURDERS?

COME ON, VOL. I'M NOT THAT STUPID.



AND NEITHER IS SHE. SOMETIMES I THINK YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU BEING BATMAN MEANS FOR OTHER PEOPLE. AND IF YOU START RANDOMLY DRAGGING HER INTO THIS NONSENSE--

TRYING TO DO RIGHT IS NONSENSE?

YOU'VE GOT ME RUNNING AROUND NEW YORK LOOKING FOR REAL ESTATE FOR A MYSTERIOUS BUYER...



WE NEED A JOINT WE CAN WORK FROM.

YEAH, AND MEANWHILE PEOPLE THINK I'M JUST A FRONT TRYING TO LAUNDER MONEY FOR RUSSIAN CRIMINALS.

I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE JUDGED, VOL.

SAYS THE BILLIONAIRE'S SON.



I WASN'T TRYING TO HAVE THE SAME FOR YOU. AND NO, I DON'T KNOW WHAT BEING BATMAN MEANS FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND ME.

BUT I KNOW THIS--I CAN'T DO IT ALONE.



YOU, HADIYAH... YOU GUYS ARE MY--



YOUR...
"TEAM"?

YES. MY
TEAM.

DIDN'T
KNOW YOU
HAD A
"TEAM."

WELL, I DO.
WHAT YOU'RE
LOOKING AT IS A
BREAKDOWN OF PEOPLE
AND SUSPICIOUS
ACTIVITY THAT FIT THE
PROFILE WE'VE BUILT
FOR MANRAY.

WHO'S
MANRAY?

JUST A DESIGNATION
I'VE GIVEN THE
KILLER. AS FAR AS HIS
MOTIVATIONS...

...HE BELIEVES HE'S
EXPOSING TO THE WORLD THE
UGLINESS OF POWERFUL PEOPLE WHO
PASS THEMSELVES OFF AS SAINTS.

SO
BASICALLY,
DUDE'S A VIGILANTE
WHO THINKS HIS
JUSTICE IS REAL
JUSTICE.

HE'S NOT
LIKE ME IF
THAT'S WHAT
YOU'RE
IMPLYING.

I SAW YOU BEAT THE ~~SHIT~~ OUT OF
A SUSPECT YOU WERE APPREHENDING.
I'M NOT "IMPLYING" MANRAY'S LIKE
YOU. I'M ASKING: ARE YOU
LIKE HIM?

LOOK AT US,
BATMAN. WE COULDN'T BE MORE
OPPOSITE THE PREVAILING
CULTURE IF WE TRIED.

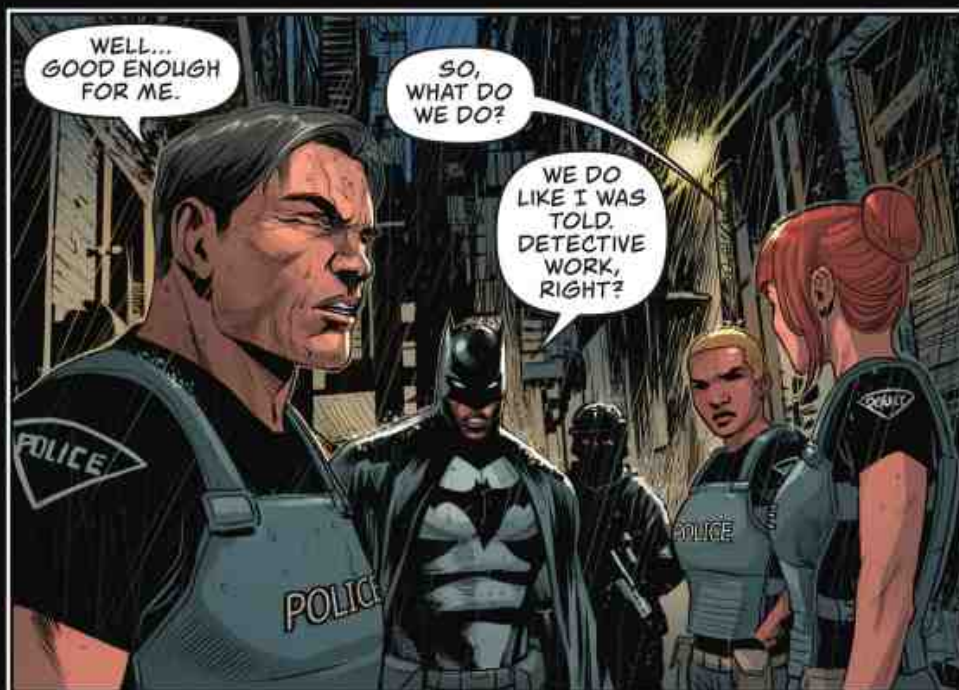
PEOPLE ARE
WAITING FOR US TO FAIL.
AND IF WE DON'T GET THIS
RIGHT, BADGE-HEAVY COPS
LIKE KEENAN GET TO HAND
OUT THEIR KIND OF JUSTICE.

SO WHEN IT
COMES TO YOU...
YEAH, I NEED TO
KNOW WHAT I'M
DEALING WITH.

TRUTH IS, DETECTIVE, I'M
FIGURING OUT A LOT OF
THIS IN REAL TIME. FROM
THE JUMP, YOU AND I'VE
HAD A BAD START.

BUT I KNOW
WHAT DOING RIGHT
MEANS TO YOU. AND
I KNOW PEOPLE
ARE COUNTING
ON ME...

I WON'T
LET YOU
DOWN.



WELL...
GOOD ENOUGH
FOR ME.

SO,
WHAT DO
WE DO?

WE DO
LIKE I WAS
TOLD.
DETECTIVE
WORK,
RIGHT?



...YEAH.
RIGHT...

WE'VE
EACH GOT THE
LIST-NAMES,
LOCATIONS...

THE BODIES WERE FOUND
HERE IN BUSHWICK, AND WE
KNOW MANRAY'S AN ARTIST. AT
LEAST HE THINKS HE IS. SO...



"...WE GO OUT INTO
THE NIGHT. KNOCK ON
DOORS. INTERVIEW
THE SUSPECTS.



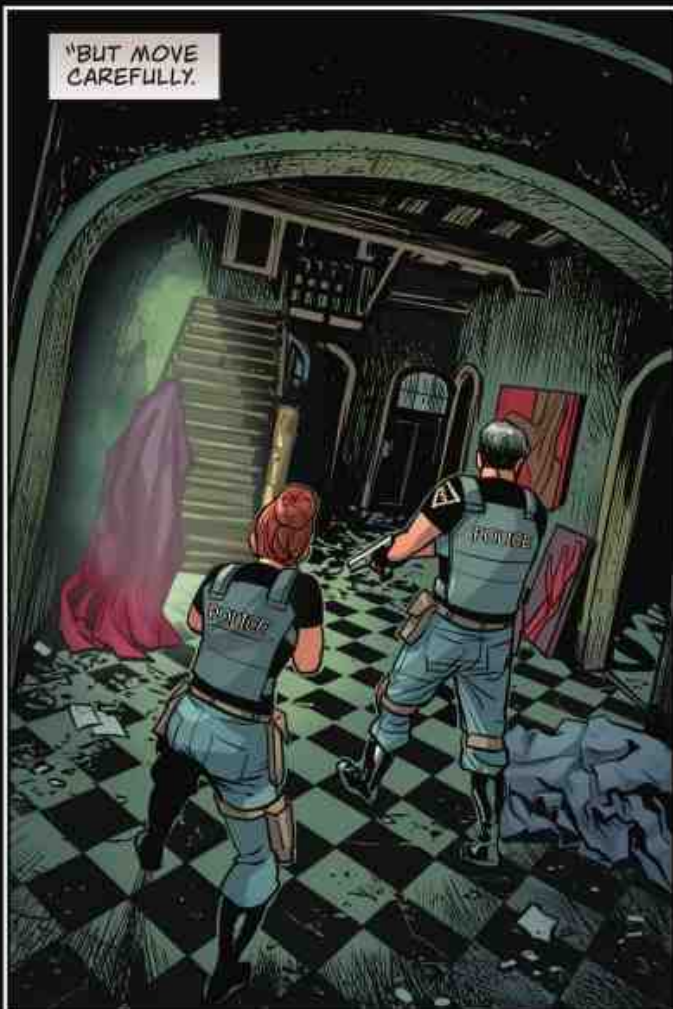
"PEOPLE WHO
WON'T TALK, WE
SURVEIL THEM.



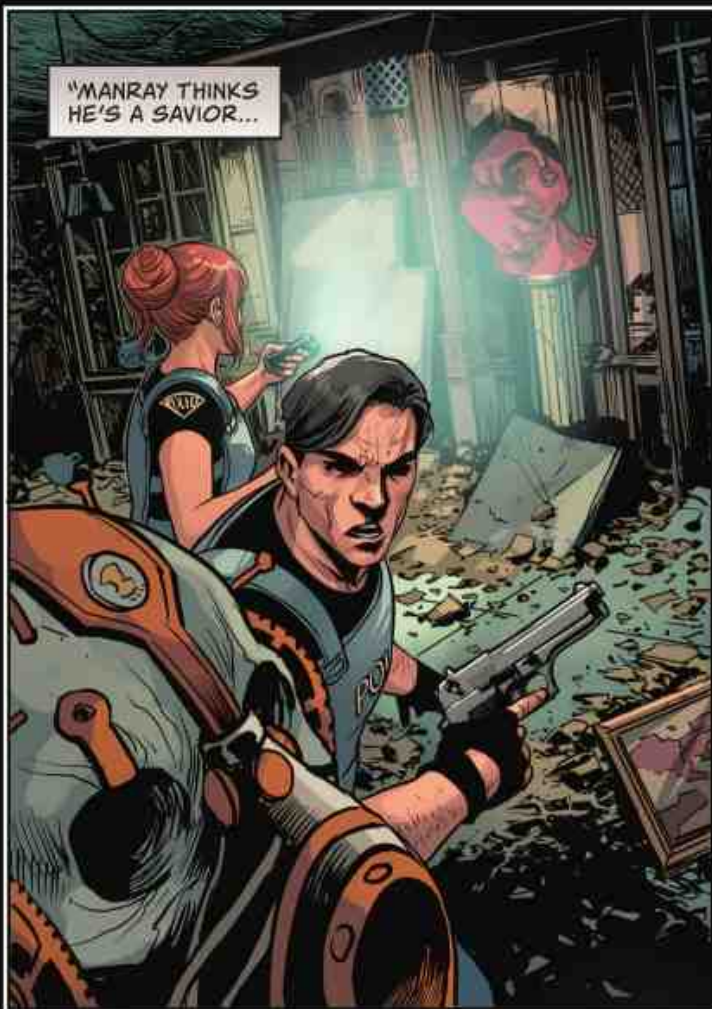
"MANRAY'S
TAKEN OVER
ABANDONED
ARTIST LOFTS.

"FIND THEM.
SEARCH
THEM."

"BUT MOVE
CAREFULLY."



"MANRAY THINKS
HE'S A SAVIOR..."



"...BUT HE IS
TWISTED. TWISTED
BEYOND HELP."

...JESUS...

CHUBB,
IT'S MUELLER.
WE FOUND
SOMETHING.







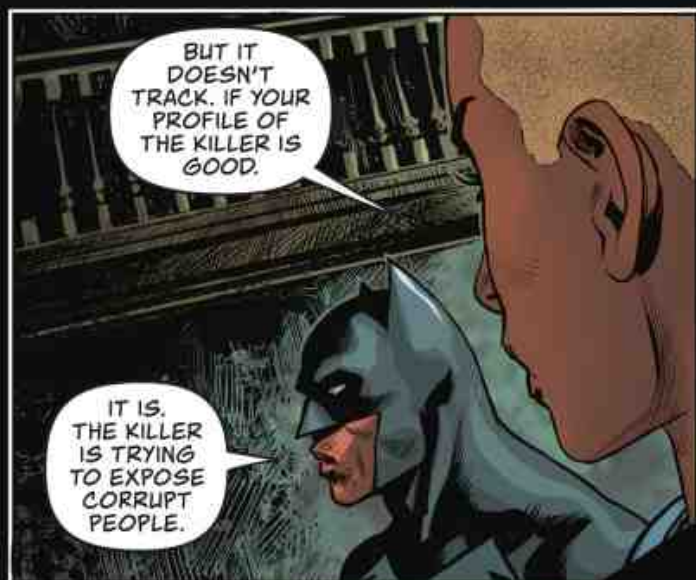
THE BUILDING WAS ABANDONED, BUT IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS OUR GUY WAS SQUATTING HERE.

WHAT WHITAKER AND MUELLER FOUND, BEST WE CAN TELL IT'S SOME KIND OF...



A PROOF OF CONCEPT OF HIS NEXT VICTIM.

YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.



BUT IT DOESN'T TRACK. IF YOUR PROFILE OF THE KILLER IS GOOD.

IT IS. THE KILLER IS TRYING TO EXPOSE CORRUPT PEOPLE.



THEN YOU SEE WHY WE'VE GOT TO KEEP THIS ON THE DL.

...YEAH...

IF IT TURNS
OUT MAYOR
VILLANUEVA
IS DIRTY, YOU
AND I ARE



NEXT:
**EVERYBODY'S
DIRTY**

A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS. A NEW ADVERSARY ARRIVES.
THE LEGENDARY SERIES RETURNS!

FABLES

#151

The **BLACK FOREST**

Written by
BILL WILLINGHAM

Art by
MARK BUCKINGHAM

May



**BLACK
LABEL**

AGES 17+

AQUAMAN

ANDROMEDA

INTERVIEW WITH

RAM V AND CHRISTIAN WARD

The King of Atlantis meets cosmic horror in *Aquaman: Andromeda* by writer Ram V and artist Christian Ward. In this new three-issue DC Black Label series, a massive, mysterious structure has been discovered at the most remote point on Earth... and it seems like it's waking up.

What's the high-concept pitch for *Aquaman: Andromeda*?

Ram V: *Aquaman: Andromeda* follows a crew of scientists sent in to investigate an unidentified object landing at Point Nemo in the Pacific. In the course of this, they encounter the creature that landed in the ocean—but they also have first contact with Aquaman, who has been brought there for mysterious reasons.

As we'll go on to discover, being underwater in the ocean accounts for a lot of pressure, and the things we tried to drown in our past begin to resurface once again.

In what ways do Aquaman and his world lend themselves to horror?

Christian Ward: For me, the ocean is an incredibly terrifying place. Essentially, it's outer space on Earth. Aquaman is the king of this place, so it made natural sense to use the terrifying aspects of that alien environment to bring out the horror—and of course, Aquaman exists within that. So we've leaned on that to do something quite scary.



Ram, how did you come up with the mysterious entity the crew discovers in this series?

V: The creature actually comes from DC history and lore. Part of what I love about comics is that it genuinely feels like a 100-year-old tapestry that everyone's worked on, and you get to come in and have your time with it for a while. I really enjoy going back to decades of history and picking out one thing—"Why hasn't anyone used this?"

Christian, how did you balance your flair for bright colors with the dark depths of the ocean?

Ward: This is a book of two halves. You've got your big, bombastic action sequences—which are so thrilling to draw, and incredibly thrilling to read. But it's also a book with very quiet, but quite intense, very psychological moments. There's a flashback sequence that's very muted, but I think out of the whole book, for all of the big moments, that's probably my favorite sequence.

**DON'T MISS
AQUAMAN: ANDROMEDA #1,
ON SALE IN JUNE!**



Ages 17+

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